

THE GUARDIAN

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1ST CAVALRY TAKES BAGHDAD REINS

Baghdad.

"It seems like only yesterday that I led the 'First Team' here," said Chiarelli. "I know you will build on the exceptional success of the 4th Infantry Division. I have complete confidence that you will make the difference."

Chiarelli said all 4th Infantry Division soldiers should be proud of what they accomplished during their tenure in Baghdad. He said the soldiers had a direct, positive impact on the Iraqi people's day-to-day lives, including increased electricity, improved sewage systems and a monumental increase in trained Iraqi security forces.

"This is the decisive period in the campaign for Iraq," said Maj. Gen. James D. Thurman, commanding general, 4th Infantry Division. "Fighting side by side with Iraqi security forces, we have become brothers in arms, seeking a common goal."

The 4th Infantry Division commander addressed an audience of Iraqi and coalition leaders, looking back on a year's worth of successes and sacrifices by his forces.

"Since Jan. 7, the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of the coalition forces, standing side by side with the 'jundis' (soldiers) and 'shurtas' (officers) of the Iraqi security forces, have courageously faced a determined enemy," he said. "They

have fought the terrorists in the streets, farmlands and deserts of four provinces: Baghdad, Babil, Karbala and Najaf.

"Our combined efforts enabled a new, democratically elected government to form and begin leading the Iraqi people, living in a free nation," Thurman said.

With the colors of his division cased and ready to accompany him home, Thurman's thoughts were focused on the efforts of his soldiers and on the support of their families.



Army Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil Jr., left, and Command Sgt. Maj. Phillip Johndrow uncased the 1st Cavalry Division flag during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq, Nov. 15. The "First Team" takes over control of Multinational Division Baghdad from the 4th Infantry Division, which now returns to its Fort Hood, Texas, home. Photo by Sgt. Ann Drier, USA

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Army Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil Jr., left, commanding general of 1st Cavalry Division; Army Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, center, commanding general of Multinational Corps Iraq; and Army Maj. Gen. James D. Thurman, commanding general of 4th Infantry Division, salute the American flag during the national anthem at a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq, Nov. 15. Photo by Spc. Rodney Foliente, USA

Army Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil Jr., left, commanding general of 1st Cavalry Division; Army Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, center, commanding general of Multinational Corps Iraq, and Army Maj. Gen. James D. Thurman, commanding general of 4th Infantry Division, stride forward and kick off the transfer of authority ceremony for Multinational Division Baghdad at Camp Liberty, Iraq, Nov. 15. Photo by Spc. Rodney Foliente, USA

"Our families and friends wait for us in the United States," he said. "They have been patient and have supported us unflinchingly. We return to our homes and families proud of our contribution to bettering the lives of the Iraqi people."

Army Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil Jr., commanding general, 1st Cavalry Division, uncased his colors and assumed command of the mission as the two divisions' colors changed position in the

honor guard procession.

"The First Team is committed to continue to improve the security situation, to build upon the work of the 'Ironhorse Division,' to work hand in hand with our brothers in the Iraqi security forces, and to support those Iraqi forces as they move to the lead to assist the Iraqi people in achieving a more prosperous and peaceful future," he said.

Fil thanked the 4th Infantry Division for its efforts in providing a smooth transition with the 1st Cavalry Division, and he took a moment to recognize all the forces that make up Multinational Division Baghdad.

"While it is my honor to lead the First Team back to Baghdad, Multinational Division Baghdad is so much more than just the 1st Cavalry Division," he said. "The ranks of Multinational Division Baghdad are filled with our Iraqi partners, every service component of the U.S. military, and soldiers from nearly every active Army division in the inventory."

"I look forward to leading this amazing formation," Fil continued, "in an effort to help the good people of Iraq realize their destiny which is a safe and secure Iraq, where freedom reigns."

(Army Spc. Karl Johnson is assigned to the 363rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.)

The Guardian is published monthly by Dennis Blessing, Service Officer of the Madera County Veterans Service Office. It is freely issued, via email, to all Madera Veterans and Service Organizations.

The primary purpose of this publication is to provide County Veterans with a timely news source; effectively informing veterans of VA up-dates and other pertinent information. Hopefully, it will also serve as an inter-group vehicle, announcing important activities and information offered by other local service organizations.

Your comments and suggestions are always welcomed.

Dennis Blessing, Publisher

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"FIRST TEAM" 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION

TAKES OVER IN BAGHDAD FROM THE 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION!



SPC Jennifer Laroach, of Brooklyn, New York, gets gold spurs placed on her boots during the Headquarters Company, 312th Military Intelligence Battalion spur ceremony 26 January at Camp Liberty. 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers who participated in combat operations are inducted into the 'Order of the Spur' by the division, signified by a gold spur. (Photo courtesy of PFC Ricardo Branch, 3d Infantry Division.)

1st Cav's big score could get bigger

CAMP BLACK JACK, Iraq — Any way you look at it, it was a big score. First Cavalry Division officials are analyzing artillery shells that were part of a weapons cache seized Saturday night outside Baghdad.

Ordnance experts are analyzing the shells, trying to determine if they're conventional 155 mm artillery shells or if they contain other substances, including sarin nerve gas or phosphorus, said Maj. Derik von Recum, spokesman for the 1st Cav's 2nd Brigade.

On Saturday, a roadside bomb using a 155 mm shell filled with sarin exploded in Baghdad. It's unclear whether that bomb is connected to this weapons cache.

Some of the shells were leaking, according to soldiers on the scene. Even if the shells turn out to be conventional, it would still be one of the most significant weapons seizures during the Fort Hood, Texas-based 1st Cav's four months in Iraq.

FROM THE FRONT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE



TURKEY CROSSING - U.S. Army soldiers in a Stryker combat vehicle stop for a line of turkeys crossing the road in Mosul, Iraq, Nov. 3, 2006. The soldiers are with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Antonieta



SNAKE HUNTER - U.S. Army Sgt. Kenny Alicea provides security during Operation Snake Hunter in Muqadiyah, Iraq, Nov. 19, 2006. Alicea is assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division's Troop C, 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Lawree R

FROM THE FRONT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE



LOADING BRADLEYS - Soldiers load Bradley Fighting Vehicles onto flatbed trucks on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Oct. 23, 2006. The soldiers are assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and they were preparing their vehicles to be transported into theater for the unit's current deployment. U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Ben Fox



SCANNING THE HORIZON - A U.S. Army sniper from the Jalalabad Provincial Reconstruction Team scans the horizon after reports of suspicious activity along the hill-tops near Dur Baba, Afghanistan, Oct. 19, 2006. A medical civic action project was conducted by the Jalalabad PRT and the Cooperative Medical Assistance team. U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Bertha Flores

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